



THE  
CONNOISSEUR.

By Mr. T O W N,  
CRITIC and CENSOR-GENERAL.

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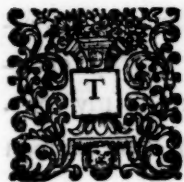
THURSDAY, March 14, 1754.

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*Pœnitet hospitii, cùm me spectante, lacertos  
Imponit collo rusticus ille tuo.*

*Oscula cùm vero coram non dura daretis,  
Ante oculos posui pocula sumpta meos.*

OVID.



HE ingenious correspondent, to whom I  
am obliged for the following letter, will,  
I hope, excuse the alterations, which I  
have taken the liberty to make in it.

To Mr. T O W N.

S I R,

I SHALL make no apology for recommending to your  
notice as CENSOR GENERAL, a fault which is  
too common among married people. Love is indeed a  
very rare ingredient in modern wedlock, nor can the

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parties

parties entertain too much affection for each other; but an open display of it on all occasions renders them ridiculous.

A FEW days ago I was introduced to a young couple, who were but lately married, and are reckoned by all their acquaintance to be exceeding happy in each other. I had scarce saluted the bride, when the husband caught her eagerly in his arms, and almost devoured her with kisses. When we were seated, they took care to place themselves close to each other, and during our conversation he was piddling with her fingers, tapping her cheek, or playing with her hair. At dinner they were mutually employed in pressing each other to taste of every dish, and the fond appellations of "my dear, my love, &c." were continually bandied across the table. Soon after the cloth was removed, the lady made a motion to retire, but the husband prevented the compliments of the rest of the company by saying, "We should be unhappy without her." As the bottle went round he join'd her health to every toast, and could not help now and then rising from his chair to press her hand, and manifest the warmth of his passion by the ardour of his caresses. This precious fooling, though it highly entertained them, gave me great disgust, therefore, as my company might very well be spared, I took my leave as soon as possible.

THIS behaviour, though at all times improper, may in some sort be excused, where perhaps the match has been huddled up by the parents, and the young people are such new acquaintance, that they scarce ever saw each other 'till their marriage. A pair of loving turtles may be indulged in a little amorous billing at their first coming  
together.

together, but this licence should expire with the Honey-moon, and even in that period be used but sparingly.

Nothing is more common than to see a new-married couple setting out with a splendor in their equipage, furniture, and manner of living, which they have been afterwards obliged to retrench: thus it happens when they have made themselves remarkable by a show of excessive love. They begin with great *eclat*, are lavish of their fondness at first, but their whole stock is soon wasted, and their poverty is the more insupportable, as their former profusion has made it more conspicuous. I have remarked the ill consequence of this indiscretion in both cases: one couple has at last had separate beds, while the other have been carried to the Opera in hackney chairs.

Two people, who are to pass their whole lives together, may surely find time enough for dalliance without playing over their pretty tricks in public. How ridiculous would it appear, if in a large assembly every one should select his mate, and the whole company should fall into couples, like the birds on *Valentine's Day*! It is equally absurd to see a man and his wife eternally trifling and toying together,

*Still amorous, and fond, and billing,*

*Like Philip and Mary on a shilling.*

HUDIB.

I HAVE often been reduced to a kind of awkward distress on these occasions, not knowing which way to look, or what to say. I consider them as playing a game in which the stander-by is not at all interested, and would therefore

fore recommend it to every third person in these circumstances to take it as a hint that the parties have a mind to be alone, and leave the room without further ceremony.

A FRIEND of mine happened to be engaged in a visit to one of these loving couples. He sat still for some time without interrupting the little endearments that passed between them. Finding them at length quite lost in Nods, Whispers, Ogles, and in short wholly taken up with each other, he rang the bell, and desired the servant to send in my lady's woman. When she came, he led her very gravely to the settee, and began to indulge himself in certain freedoms, which provoked the damsel to complain loudly of his rudeness. The lady flew into a violent passion, and rated him severely for his monstrous behaviour. My friend begged her pardon with great politeness, hoped she was not offended, for that he thought there had been no harm in amusing himself a little while with Mrs. *Betty*, in the same manner as Her Ladyship and Sir *John* had been amusing themselves these two hours.

BUT if this conduct is blameable in young people, how very absurd is it in those advanced in years! Who can help laughing when he sees a worn-out Beau and Belle practising at threescore the very follies that are ridiculous at sixteen? I could wish that such a pair of antiquated lovers were delineated by the pencil of a Hogarth. How humourously would he represent two emaciated wrinkled figures, with eyes sunk into their heads, lank cheeks, and toothless gums, affecting to leer, smile, and languish at each other! But this affectation is still more remarkable, when a liquorish old fool is continually fondling a young wife: though perhaps the sight is not so disgusting to a stranger, who may reasonably suppose

suppose it to be the overflowings of a father's tenderness for his daughter.

It sometimes happens that one of them perceives the folly of this behaviour. I have seen a sensible man quite uneasy at the indiscreet marks of kindness shewn by his lady. I know a clergyman in the country, who is often put to the blush by the strange familiarities, which his wife's love induces her to take with him. As she has had but an indifferent education, you would often be at a loss to know whether she is very kind, or very rude. If he dines abroad, she always sees him get on horseback, and before he has got twenty yards from the door, hollows after him, "be at home in time, my dear dog, do." I have known her almost quarrel with him for not buttoning his coat in the middle of Summer, and she once had the good nature to burn a very valuable collection of *Greek* Manuscripts, lest the poring over those horrid crooked letters should put her dear *Jack's* eyes out. Thus does she torment the poor parson with her violent affection for him, and according to the common phrase, kills him with kindness.

I WOULD recommend it to all married people, but especially to the ladies, not to be so sweet upon their dears before company. But I would not be understood to countenance that coldness and indifference, which is so fashionable in the polite world. Nothing is accounted more ungenteel than for a husband and wife to be seen together in public places; and if they should ever accidentally meet, they take no more notice of each other, than if they were absolute strangers. The gentleman may lavish as much gallantry as he pleases on other women, and the lady give encouragement to twenty pretty fellows without censure;

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but they would either of them blush at being surprized in shewing the least marks of a regard for each other.

BEFORE I conclude I cannot but take notice of those luscious love-scenes, that have so great a share in our modern plays; which are rendered still more fulsome by the officiousness of the player, who takes every opportunity of heightening the expression by kisses and embraces. In a Comedy, nothing is more relished by the audience than a loud smack which echoes through the whole house, and in the most passionate scenes of a Tragedy, the Hero and Heroine are continually flying into each others arms. For my part I am never present at a scene of this kind, which produces a conscious smiler from the Boxes, and a hearty chuckle of applause from the Pit and Galleries, but I am ready to exclaim with old *Renault* — “I like not these huggers.”

*I am, Sir,*

*Your humble Servant, &c.*